cultural sectors in the region as well as due to its geographical proximity.

(b) if so, what are the details of strategies worked out to increase intra-region trade, investment and economic cooperation closely integrated with world order-particularly with reference to emerging regional groups and trading blocks around the world; and

(c) the details of steps taken to strengthen the ties with the nations of the Asia Pacific region in mutual interest?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA): (a) Government are considering participation in the activities of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). India's membership in APEC is not visualised at present. We are, however, examining modalities for possible participation in the work programmes of APEC which are open to all countries.

(b) Our general policy towards regional economic groupings is of constructive participation aimed at strengthening economic cooperation and facilitating ties and interaction between the people, business and industry associations and technical institutes in India and those in the outside world to mutual benefit.

(c) India already has excellent relations with the nations of the Asia-Pacific region. Apart from frequent meetings of political leaders, institutionalised fora for discussing outstanding economic issues such as, e.g., Joint Trade Committees/ Business Forums/Study Committees have been established. Regular meetings are held at all levels in order to develop our economic and commercial cooperation in line with out priorities.

Rights Under Indo-Nepal Treaty

2673. SHRI RATNA BAHADUR RAI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that as per the clause 7 of the Indo-Nepal Treaty signed in 1950, citizens of both the countries are conferred with civil rights such as right of movement in each other's country and such employment like purchase of properties and undertaking business etc. without any restrictions; and

(b) if so, the detials thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA): (a) and (b) Under Article 7 of the Indo-Nepal Treaty of 1950 the Governments of India and Nepal agree to grant, on a reciprocal basis, to the nationals of one country in the territories of the other the same privileges in the matter of residence, ownership of property, participation in trade and commerce, movement and other privileges of a similar nature.

Compensation to Bhutan on a Lease Hold Land

2674. SHRI RATNA BAHADUR RAI: will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Kalimgpong-Dooris parts of Bhutan is still a lease hold land and Government of India are paying annual compensation to Bhutan in terms of money; and

(b) if so, what is the present amount of money being paid annualy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA): (a) No Sir.

(b) Does not arise.